Chicano Department VS Program

In 1983, the Chicano Advisory Committee (CAC) was requesting a Chicano Studies **Department**. Instead they were granted a Chicano Studies **Program**.

What's the difference? Does it really matter? At least we got something!

Here's the difference:

DEPARTMENT is established as part of the UW system's bi-annual budget for the State of Wisconsin, reviewed by the Joint Finance Committee, and approved by the State's Legislature's for UW systems wide support. It's guaranteed yearly money for its management and operation by the UW-systems Board of Regents. A Department is cast in stone by State of Wisconsin for the will of the people of this State,

PROGRAM is a bi-annual consideration, it can be cut at any time by the UW Administration!

Yes, it's better than nothing. But here we are **in 2026,** still without a Chicano Studies Department. Are we really that insignificant? WE ARE NOT! We're part of the 4th largest ethnic group in American, banded with the rubric Hispanic. But we call ourselves CHICAN!!!

Following is historical documentation of what came about.

M.E.CH.A. MOVIMIENTO ESTUDIANTIL CHICANO DE AZTLAN
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

710 University Avenue
Madison, Wisconsin 53706
(608) 263-4830

Political Workshop-October 15,1983

Historical references of a decade of Chicano student liberation-UW-Madison-D.Gaytan y J.Salas

Initial Chicano UW services evolves out of the office of undergraduate orientation. Office linked to admission, student aid and housing services.

Under the direction of Wilma Gomez, 1st Chicana director in-1973, students actively involved in recruitment, Name is changed to La Raza Unida in solidarity with the Chicano political efforts in Tejas, organization files for non-profit status with secretary of state.

Francisco Rodriguez succeeds Wilma in 974. Student intesive involvement pay off. La Raza Unida is budgeted money for activities, also recruitment. Second La Raza opens in basement of Catholic church.

Prospero Saiz teaches first Chicano academic course.

Chicano students named to Chicano Advisory Committee. Letters and Sciences student members: D. Saldana, R. Salas, S. Garcia, later J. Salas replaces R. Salinas.

Tension develops in Raza over sexism issue. Seperate Chicana organization is formed , Las adelitas issue is never satisfactorily resolved. Other major problems surface; cutbacks are proposed for all minority centers (Afro- Americans, Native-Amercans).

Native American center is taken over by students. Chicanos and Blacks participate in solidarity. Direct action occurs spontaneously. After second day, students evacuate building.

Lesson is not lost on Chicanos in the Chicano Advisory Committee (CAC). We are made aware of the limitations of programs. We proceed to the develpment of a Chicano Studies Department.

Chicano Advisory Committee votes for creation of Department in the spring of 1975. During the debate, the issue of limitation of funds is brought up. Faculty members argue that the Chicano

Studies Department must be considered on its own merits. The issue of the availabilities of funds is not the primary consideration of the committee.

After the affirmative vote on the Department, the committee proceeds to vote for expenditures of monies allocated to it by Cronon, Dean of the college of Letters and Sciences. Cronon is initially reluctant. He later refuses to act on recommendation of the CAC that he personally named. His position is precedented.

Raza Unida students meet, draw up demands and voted to sit up a picket line until demands are met.

Besides the creation of the Chicano Advisory Committee, other demands include; the hiring of Chicano staff at the five year program, student loans, admissions, Office of Dean of students, Chancellors office and the UW Presidnets staff.

Cronon refuses to act on the recommendation of the CAC. Offers are made to La Raza Unida to participate in negotiations on staff position and Raza refuses to separate the Chicano Department from the support staff. The University proceeds to hire Chicano/Latinos to positions on its own.

A discrimination complaint is filed with the Department of Justice/ office of Community Relations. Local and statewide organizing effort is initiated. Raza Unida links with the OHA, local Raza CBO. OHA joins picket line and sets up kitchen for students.

La Raza develops legislative lobbying effort. They successfully lobbies before the Wisconsin Senate sub-committee that reviews University budget. $50,000 are added to the UW budget for the purpose of creating a Chicano Studies Department.

La Raza lobbies the admendment through the full senate in the spring of 1975. the Bill goes to the Joint Finance Committee(House senate) and the University lobbyists prvail on the Chairman Conta. We meet with him and he informs us that he will allow the money, but will change the word "Department to "Program".

Ricardo Enriquez, Jose de Paz follow Reyes. Mario Compean is hired 9/83.

Chicano Political Workshop

I. Outline of Prospero Saiz Presentation

There is presently no Chicano movement. We are fared with the following four modes:

A. Marginal

B. Incorporated

C. Internationalism

D. Nationalism/Separatism

Historically speaking, the limbo of the pre-50's is followed by an incipient awareness of ourselves, later, self-consciousness. The Chicano Political activity of the 60's, I would call an insurrection rather than a revolt, as it is popularly called. Revolt signifies a relationship to the political system which we don't have.

Latest movement confronts first, the closure of the system with violence, later incorpoation. Second, the political system creates a 'buffer zone' in response to the Chicano demands. The Governors' Hispanic Office, special Chicano desks, Affirmative Action Office's, Chicano recruitment efforts are created to absorb, to incorporate the political activity *(1), These individuals become Chicano social pimps, agents for the 'system'.

Another mode, one I would call a Culturalist*(2) mode is how the organizational activity is directed at celebrating the 16 de Septiembre, 5 de Mayo and the like. I would place MEChA in this mode.

*(1) Thereby co-opting and diffusing the political movement.

*(2) By reproducing culture in this sense we render culture static. Culture instead should be a Dynamic Process-By creating and announcing a new culture!

II. Outline of Theory of Society

A. Central System of Practices, Meanings, Values

1) Dominant/ Effective
2) Meanings, not autonomous, they are corpoate
3) Meaning and values are all lived experiences personified by instituions, best example, University.
4) Reciprocally conferming, We reproduce them thru daily experience.
5) University also center of economic activity, it is Selective *(1) Chicanos are not included--Of the over 16,00 students in Letters and Science how many are Chicanos? How many of the 1,222 professors are Chicanos? Of the over 8,000 Academic courses offered during a school year none are Chicano Studies *(2). There have been only 3 Or 4 Chicano courses in the last ten years.

*(1) Corporate System-Incorporated/Excluded

*(2) Also 80 Departments?Disciplines!!

III. CHICANO CULTURE AND POLITICS - THE CHICANO PROBLEMATIC.

A. In state of turnmoil and contradiction
B. Artifacts and symbols of the sixties must be converted to what is presently emerging in the movement of the 80s.
C. This then, renders culture active and not reactive.
D. Residual experience, is it viable?
E. Analyze what is emerging.

IV. INTERNATIONAL/NATIONALISM DIALECTIC

A. Classical notion of nationalism - 19th Century Enlightment.
B. Internationalism as third-world movement; what is happening in Central America is not international, the terms are not operative.
C. Define Democracy. Break down the term. Uncover the code words. Democracy as an open society, what does it mean? We want U.S. style democracy in Central America, i.e., open to U.S. economic penetration. U.S. corporations are free to invest and repatriate.
D. No international movement at this time. All are Nationalistic -19th century notion; break up flow of "free market". Present level of political discourse has no meaning. Must diferentiate ideology/practice; Cuba and Nicaragua can speak internationally ideologically, but in practice they are nationalistic. They can't aid and abett other National liberation movements.